

Victory Times



Telling the United States Forces - Iraq story

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40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion hands over final mission

Story and photos by
SpC. Charlene Apatang Mendiola
USF-I Public Affairs

The 40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion out of Fort Huachuca, Ariz., cased its colors signifying a successful mission and the transfer of responsibility to Fort Hood, Texas' 62nd ESB during a transfer of authority ceremony on Camp Victory, May 30.

The ceremony began with the color guard, which included Soldiers of the 40th ESB and the 62nd ESB, officiating the transfer as both commanders and command sergeants major of each battalion cased and uncased their flags to signify the start

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Lt. Col. Troy Douglas, commander 40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion and Command Sgt. Maj. Perry Summerville, command sergeant major, 40th ESB, case the battalion colors signifying the end of a successful mission as they render authority and responsibility to the 62nd ESB during the transfer of authority ceremony on Camp Victory, May 30.

Environmental managers clear sites, close bases

Story and photos by Sgt. TJ Moller
USF-I Public Affairs

The task of surveying and clearing sites which were used by more than 160,000 U.S. service members during the height of the Iraq conflict, falls on the shoulders of 12 United States Forces-Iraq environmental managers.

Environmental managers conduct surveys to identify environmental areas of concern and ensure the environment is properly maintained as U.S. forces turn more bases over to the government of Iraq, the U.S. Department of State and Office of Security Cooperation - Iraq.

Surveying sites and ensuring that

the U.S. military's presence has minimal impact on the environment is one of the main goals of the mission, said Pamela L. Davis, an environmental manager with the environmental section, USF-I engineers.

"These professionals bridge the gap between the USF-I environmental section

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Chaplain's Corner

The things I miss while I am deployed

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Dave Tish
116th Garrison Command

There are many things you and I miss while we are deployed. The one I cherish the most is my anniversary.

One of my jobs as a chaplain is to provide marriage counseling. As a chaplain, I listen to many marriage woes and hear about broken or breaking relationships. I hear many stories and reasons why couples are struggling. At times, I am asked, "what can I do to save or fix my relationship." Each time, I feel the pain of the person talking to me. I wish there was a magic pill I could give out that would heal each relationship. Here in theater, I only have one partner present in a counseling session.

So in just a few words, what can I say is the basis for the success of my relationship? I say simple, but it is really not that simple; early on in my marriage I looked my wife in the

eyes and said, "divorce is not an option, we have to work this thing out." When needed, we took the time to seek outside help from a trusted friend or counselor. We spent time sitting down and discussing the issues until we worked out a solution. If the problem came up again, we repeated our actions until we could embrace each other in true love.

Second, I cherished my wife. I practiced the principle of serving her, not demanding that she serve me. Too often in our relationships we get demanding of one another and forget that we are a team and need to serve each other and live together.

Let me close with this: as a chaplain, the Bible I use records numerous statements on love. Here are two of them: "God is love" and "if I don't have love I am nothing." Even in our separation during deployment let us learn to love our spouses anew.

SAPR Spotlight



What are your rights as a sexual assault victim? (AR 27-10):

- Be Treated w/ Fairness, Dignity & Respect
- Be Protected From the Offender
- Be Notified (Present at) Court Proceedings
- Confer With the Prosecutor
- Receive Info About the Court Martial Process
- Seek Damages
- Have Privacy Rights Respected

Call the USF-I Deployed Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (DSARC) at 485-5085 or 435-2235 for help. Army members should seek assistance with their Unit Victim Advocate (UVA) or DSARC.



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USF - I Commanding General: Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III
USF - I Senior Public Affairs Officer: Col. Kevin V. Arata
USF - I Senior PA Enlisted Advisor: Sgt. Maj. Sharon Opeka
Editor: Sgt. TJ Moller
Print Staff: Staff Sgt. Edward Daileg, Sgt. A.M. LaVey
Sgt. Joseph Vine, Spc. Charlene Apatang Mendiola
Layout: Spc. Paul Holston

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Lt. Col. Willie J. Locke III, commander, 62nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion, and Command Sgt. Maj. Bobby Williams, command sergeant major, 62nd ESB, uncase the battalion colors to signify the beginning of its mission in support of Operation New Dawn as Task Force Signal during the transfer of authority ceremony on Camp Victory, May 30.

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and end of a prosperous journey.

The primary mission for the 40th ESB was to provide support and assist all United States Divisions, ensuring pocket areas were equipped with organic communications while providing enabler capabilities for the United States Forces – Iraq, said Lt. Col. Troy Douglas, commander 40th ESB.

As the keynote speaker for the ceremony, Maj. Gen. Edward C. Cardon, deputy commanding general for support, USF-I, pointed out critical accomplishments of the 40th ESB throughout its tour.

With only 37 percent personnel strength, the 40th ESB replaced the brigade headquarters and two battalions. They manned 50 percent of communications sites while taking on 75 percent of the mission load and achieved more than 98 percent reliability rate, Cardon said.

The battalion laid and terminated more than 22 miles of fiber optic and 51 miles of Category 5 cables, ended 34 missions and transitioned four sites to the government of Iraq, he said. It also partnered with Iraqis and trained them on fiber optics, cables, and basic and advanced electronic maintenance.

“We never suffered with communications,” he said. “Our communications are actually better here than many of our locations in the U.S.”

“Never have so few done so much with a no fail mission of operational communications,” Cardon said. He encouraged the Soldiers of the 40th ESB to keep up with

updates on the mission when they return home as they will witness all the fruits of their labor and to be proud of what they have accomplished.

As a tradition in the Army, losing one team and gaining another powerful team can be challenging but equally fortunate, Cardon said as he welcomed the 62nd ESB team into the Task Force Signal mission.

Douglas’ advice to his replacement was to always be flexible as the battlefield is fluid and ever changing. He encouraged the troops of the 62nd ESB to enjoy their time while deployed and to use the deployment as a learning environment for greater experiences and opportunities.

“I want to say to my troops of the 40th ESB,” he said. “Thank you for setting the standards of taking care of Soldiers and our customers. I am extremely proud of each and every one of you.”

Following Douglas’ remarks, the commander of the 62nd ESB, Lt. Col. Willie J. Locke III thanked the 40th ESB team for its warm welcome and efforts during the transition process.

“Going the extra mile wasn’t necessary but was greatly appreciated and will not be forgotten,” Locke said. “I am very proud of my unit and we are ready to execute this mission.”

“Task Force Messenger looks forward to continuing our partnership role,” Locke said during his speech. “Without a doubt, the 40th ESB team set a high bar, but I assure you, we are eager to meet the challenges that lie ahead.”

“The sun never sets on the thunderbirds, forewarned is forearmed,” he said.

Managers , From Page 1 —

and the divisions and bases,” said Lt. Col. Bryce J. Taggart, deputy chief for basing, facilities and environment, USF-I engineers. “Without their expertise and presence at the divisions or bases we could not do the environmental assessments that lead to the clean closure of bases.”

As troop presence decreases, environmental base closure surveys are being conducted to ensure the designated environmental compliance officer of each site - military and civilian - is complying with the environmental policies established by USF-I and are taking steps to prepare for the turnover.

There are many areas addressed during the surveys, said James A. Terrell, an environmental manager assigned to support United States Division-Center.

Areas such as fuel points and hazardous waste accumulation points are looked at closely due to the possibility of spills.

Along with conducting surveys, environmental managers also offer guidance to the environmental compliance officers on regulated waste turn-in procedures. They work closely with the base mayors offices in order to track cleanup progress at bases located in their areas of responsibility.

Each site must undergo a minimum of three surveys before it can be cleared for release, said Davis. Initial, preliminary and final surveys are required and additional preliminary surveys are done if needed.

If deficiencies are found during a site survey, the environmental compliance officer and environmental manager must

come up with a corrective action plan, said Davis. This plan will include a brief description of the work that needs to be done, an estimated schedule for the start and completion, the resources required and the cost associated with the project.

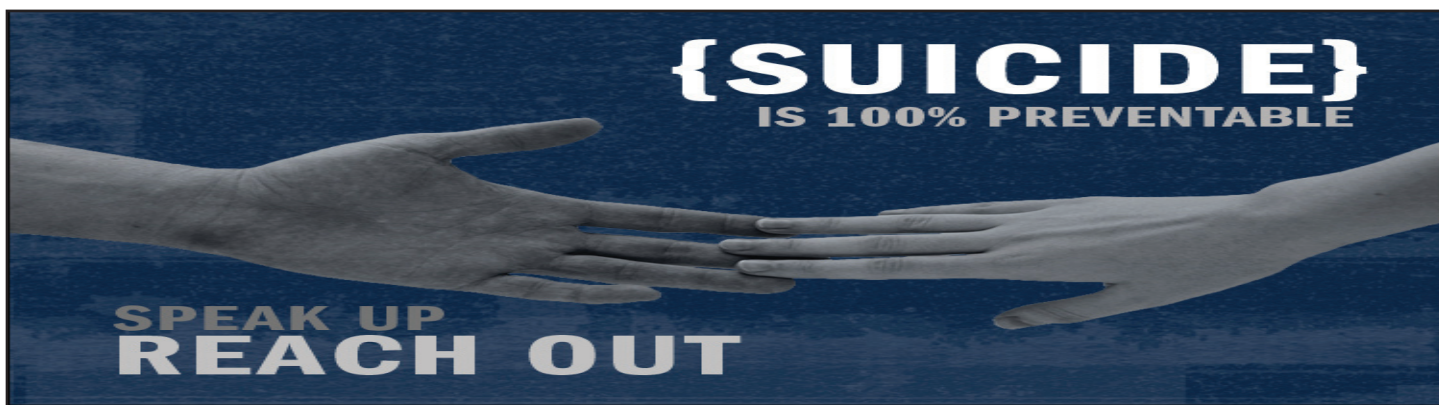
Documenting the condition of the environment and ensuring that environmental policies are being followed during military operations is a large task.

“It’s the responsible thing to do,” said Taggart. “Returning the bases and property used by U.S. forces to the government of Iraq in a clean and usable condition is our goal.”

“We are trying to hand over clean, safe facilities that the Iraqis can use,” said Terrell. “The bases are in good shape and there should not be any problems closing them.”



Pamela L. Davis, an environmental manager with the environmental section, United States Forces-Iraq engineers, and Capt. William N. Muthiora, deputy mayor, East Camp Liberty, 116th Garrison Command, United States Division-Center, point out areas of environmental concern and discuss the results from the day’s surveys at Camp Liberty, May 16. Environmental managers work closely with the different base mayors’ offices in order to track the progress of the different sites located in their areas of responsibility.



Adjutant General visits Iraq

Story and photos by Spc. Paul Holston
USF-I Public Affairs

The 64th Adjutant General of the United States Army, Brig. Gen. Richard P. Mustion, arrived in Iraq to visit service members on Camp Victory, May 30. Mustion met with more than 40 service members from the human resources section, United States Forces – Iraq, as well as other counterpart units from across the Iraq joint operations area.

Mustion, also the commanding general of the Physical Disability Agency and executive director of the Military Postal Service Agency, was given a tour of the facilities and briefed on the challenges human resource personnel have been facing throughout the IJOA.

The current Army Adjutant General serves as the 15th executive director of the Military Postal Service Agency, which

was established in 1980. As the only manager for military mail, Mustion is responsible for the movements on commercial and military aircraft, as well as commercial sealift ships to nearly 2,000 post offices throughout 85 countries.

Mustion visited Camp Victory, as well as other areas of the IJOA, to gain a better understanding of the current postal operations and issues affecting Iraq.

“This situation has been happening for about the past four to six years,” said Col. Strep R. Kuehl, directorate of human resources, USF-I. “Some of our government mail inadvertently ends up in the international mail system. There was an agreement between U.S. forces and Iraq to give it back to us.”

Kuehl, a Glenbeulah, Wis. native, said Mustion did a tour of their facilities to obtain firsthand knowledge of the challenges they have come across. “We

have been having mail challenges here in Iraq, and over the last four months we’ve been doing our best to correct it,” Kuehl said.

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jacque Nixon, executive officer of human resources, USF-I, and a Memphis, Tenn. native, said Mustion observed and analyzed the issues of the postal services and has expressed the need to figure out a resolution.

After the full day’s schedule, the service members gathered for a dinner at Joint Visitors Bureau Hotel, which opened the opportunity for the leaders to discuss issues and concerns with the adjutant general.

“The USDs received the opportunity to share lessons learned, in which Brig. Gen. Mustion facilitated a round table discussion regarding our issues and courses of action,” said Maj. Rita Holton, directorate of human resources, United States Division – South, with the 36th Infantry Division, and native of San Antonio, Texas.

During the dinner, there was a discussion of a new and improved officer evaluation system, which allowed the human resource leaders to be informed and provide input about the subject.

During the conclusion of events, Mustion expressed his gratitude and thanks to the personnel Soldiers.

“I appreciate the invitation to come over here and the opportunity to spend some time with you all,” said Mustion. “Be assured that everything that you have shown and given me will make it back in the hands of the right people. The best and brightest ideas in our Army come from the young junior enlisted, sergeants, to the captains and colonels who are out in the field doing the job each and every day. By taking your ideas and putting them together, we can make our system better to support our Soldiers and overall, our Army.”



Col. Strep R. Kuehl, directorate of human resources, United States Forces - Iraq, welcomes Brig. Gen. Richard P. Mustion, the 64th Adjutant General of the United States Army, to Victory Base Complex, May 30. Mustion was given a tour of the facilities and briefed on the challenges human resource personnel have been facing throughout the Iraq joint operations area.

UNSUNG HERO



Pfc. Marc Anthony Lopez is recognized as this week's Unsung Hero and received a certificate of achievement from Brig. Gen. Michael X. Garrett, deputy chief of staff, United States Forces - Iraq, at Al Faw Palace, June 3.

Lopez received the certificate for his outstanding performance as an intelligence analyst with the Joint Intelligence Directorate, Analysis and Production Division.

VICTORY VOICES

What are you doing to beat the heat this summer?



"Continuing to hydrate with at least a couple of water bottles a day."

**Lt.
Paul Ertel**

*Force Manager Integrator
J35, USF-I*



"Drinking water, I recommend at least three to four bottles a day."

**CW2
Jody Jones**

*Air Traffic Control Air Space
Manager/OIC
J3 Air, USF-I*



"Stretching accordingly and drinking lots of water, about three quarts for every hour."

**Spc.
Marselle Walker**

*Automated Field Artillery Tactical
Data System Specialist
Co. A, XVIII Abn. Corps*



"Because of dehydration in a combat environment, I'm drinking an average of three bottles a day."

**Staff Sgt.
Odane Morgan**

*Operational Law NCOIC
Office of The Staff Judge
Advocate, USF-I*

Safety m a t t e r s

By Jesse Martin
USF-I Safety Office

Touching animals in Iraq can be fatal

Leave animals alone. There are many different kinds of animals that occupy the same space we live in. Most of these wild animals are roaming freely, especially at night. I have seen dogs, cats, foxes, jackals, mongooses, mice, rats, and bats just to name a few. In the past, people have been attacked by stray dogs in the area of Lost Lake. None of the local animals should ever be touched, picked up, or fed by anyone. The importance of this issue cannot be understated.

Many animals in Iraq are carrying a dangerous viral infection called rabies. Rabies is a serious threat to everyone. Any contact with animals that have been exposed to rabies can be extremely dangerous and can even kill you.

Rabies is contracted by animal bites or through animal saliva coming in contact with broken skin, the eyes or the mouth. Rabies is 100 percent fatal once symptoms begin. The typical incubation period is 21-56 days, but can be as long as 180 days. Post exposure treatment and vaccination is available but currently there is a world-wide shortage, and supplies are limited.

If any of these circumstances occur notify your health care provider, Preventive Medicine and/or Veterinarian Services immediately. United States Forces-Iraq General Order #1 prohibits adopting pets as mascots, caring for or feeding any type of animals anywhere in the theater of Iraq.

The risk of contracting rabies is not worth the simple contact with the local population of animals. Don't take any chances.

Task Force Dragon 18K Fun Run



Photo by Spc. Charlene Apatang Mendiola/USF-I PAO

Runners participate in the TF Dragon 18K Fun Run on Victory Base Complex, June 4.



Photo by Sgt. Joseph A. Vine/USF-I PAO

Brig. Gen. Michael X. Garrett, deputy chief of staff, United States Forces - Iraq, leads a group of runners during the TF Dragon 18K Fun Run on Victory Base Complex, June 4.



Photo by Sgt. Joseph A. Vine/USF-I PAO

Sgt. 1st Class Aaron Miner, a personal security detail team leader with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 116th Cavalry Brigade Combat Team, wears a protective mask while running the TF Dragon 18K Fun Run on Victory Base Complex, June 4.

Warrant officers commemorate 93 years of excellence, expertise

Story and photo by
Spc. Charlene Apatang Mendiola
USF-I Public Affairs

More than 100 warrant officers from around the Iraq joint operating area gathered to commemorate 93 years of the warrant officer corps in the Al Faw Palace, May 27.

On July 9, 1918, warrant officers were inducted into the Army to serve as experts in various fields. They became a corps of specialized individuals.

"Today is significant because it represents the history of the warrant officer corps," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Anor Burnside, senior signal network advisor with directorate of communications, United States Forces – Iraq.

"While you may have a relatively short lineage in our military history," said Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III, commanding general for USF-I. "You are all members of a highly respected corps."

The traditional role of the warrant officer as a technical expert and trainer within multiple complex professions fills a vital position in today's Army.

"Each and every one of our warrant officers plays a critical role in what we have to do," Austin said during the celebration. "You can see that you are indeed a greater and important asset within the formation."

As masters of respected professions, warrant officers are indeed the experts commanders turn to for answers to extremely hard questions, Austin said. "I am grateful for what you have done and I am proud to serve alongside you."

"It is great to have our commanding general come out and speak to us during this celebration," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Timothy Cox, maintenance officer, 4th Infantry Division, United States Division –



Chief Warrant Officer 5 Steven Yatkowski, air standardization officer and senior warrant officer, directorate of operations, United States Forces – Iraq, (Left) cuts the birthday cake as Chief Warrant Officer 1 Aysu Cesmebasi, food advisor and junior warrant officer, 77th Sustainment Brigade, (Center) and Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jasper Lee, senior food advisor, directorate of food service, USF-I, watched and prepared to serve the cake to fellow chiefs during the warrant officer 93rd birthday celebration in the Al Faw Palace, May 27.

North. "I was proud that he mentioned that we have been the true continuity in the unit throughout this conflict."

Camaraderie within the warrant officer corps was displayed during the event, as the chiefs interacted with former and new colleagues. Periods of laughter, group photos, and conversations against a musical backdrop provided by the 25th Infantry Division band, contributed to the celebration's success.

The symbolic cake-cutting ceremony, conducted by the oldest and the youngest chief in the room, was a highpoint in the event.

"This is the most important part of this celebration," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Joseph Correa, military intelligence systems technician with military intelligence directorate, USF-I. "It symbolizes the passing of knowledge and wisdom of the most senior warrant officer to the most junior warrant officer."

"I am glad I was invited to this event tonight," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Darryl Sullivan, personnel officer

with the manpower section, human resources directorate, USF-I. "It is a lot different than I expected considering I am the only Marine warrant officer in Iraq."

"These warrant officers have a bond and I don't feel alone. As a matter of fact, I feel like I am one with them," Sullivan said. "As part of the corps, it is easy to bond with each other."

Cox, an Operation Desert Storm veteran, said it was significant to be a part of this birthday celebration as deployed warrant officers come together to build their strength and unity.

"This was an opportunity to meet and reunite with members of the corps," Correa said. "The bond we have in this corps and the years of experience shared in one room is extremely priceless."

As a conclusion to the event, chiefs of all ranks recited the warrant officers' creed loudly and proudly as their final birthday celebration in Iraq was dedicated to their fallen brothers and sisters within the corps.